

February 18, 2022

Appropriations Committee
CT General Assembly
210 Capitol Ave
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Appropriations Committee,

My name is Nicole Veillette and I live in a residential women's house in Willimantic, CT. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 6439, An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, and Making Appropriations Therefor. **I respectfully request the legislature increase funding by \$461 Million over five years for community nonprofits.**

I have struggled with mental health issues for most of my life. It has been a roller coaster with both highs and lows. I also, unfortunately am an addict. I have been in a few different programs for both mental health and addiction. I am currently a resident at a women's house, and I am pleased with the program overall. Although the stigma with mental health has diminished some, sadly it is still a prevalent problem affecting too many individuals. Funding for mental health services is imperative. Those of us suffering cannot fight this battle alone. I'm grateful for this program and for their groups, on-on-one therapy, and most of all the time, patience, respect, and diligence the staff offer us. Unfortunately, there are not enough programs and resources available to assist those afflicted with mental health issues. We need more one on one therapy, as well as group therapy. We need more programs, both in and outpatient, available throughout the state, making accessibility easier.

Grief is difficult for some of us to overcome, and addiction counselling would be beneficial. Also, more groups geared woman's trauma and abuse would help. Many of us have been affected by both trauma and abuse, often blaming ourselves, inevitably perpetuating self-esteem issues. Self-esteem is the core to most of our problems, and unresolved increases low self-esteem.

I ask for you to continue funding, as it is essential for those suffering to lead a good life and thrive in life. Thank you for the opportunity to write on the topic, and your time and diligence advocating for those of us suffering.

I strongly hope that the Appropriations Committee will support the requested \$461 million increase so that our non-profit services can continue to support our community. Without these services, we suffer mentally, emotionally, and cannot thrive for a happy, successful life.

Respectfully,

Nicole Veillette

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicole Veillette', written in a cursive style.